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Testimony supporting LD 527 An Act to Allow Municipalities to Create Bicycle and Pedestrian Zones with Reduced Speed Limits

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Senator Chipman, Representative Williams, esteemed committee members, thank you for hearing LD 527.

And thanks to Rep. Ankeles for bringing it forward, and the community advocates for bicyclists and pedestrians (a.k.a. vulnerable road users).

I've been commuting by bike or on foot since 1997, and it's generally quite safe, just like driving can be. Still, there are modifiable risk factors, and speed is a major one. I once was biking home from work along a road in Portland that could be impacted by this bill. It was dark, but I was wearing fluorescent clothing, with reflectors and lights, including a very bright commuter-grade helmet-mounted headlight.

There was only one motorized vehicle on the smaller intersecting road. Just him and me--approaching an intersection in which I had the right of way. However, this car was traveling a bit too fast for my comfort. Despite all my bright lighting and reflectiveness, he somehow wasn't seeing me. I slammed on the brakes, and yelled out. Then he saw me, slammed on *his* brakes, and we barely avoided each other.

I paused and caught my breath. The vehicle remained motionless for a few seconds in the intersection. As he got going again, much more slowly, he rolled down the window and apologized. I suppose we both were so relieved, and also so terrified about what could've been.

His speed was an unnecessary risk factor.

I support LD 527, not because I had this awful experience with a driver who was traveling too fast on a municipal road. I also believe in this as a systemic *local* option that can improve things:

1. Safety - In medical training and practice, more often than I'd like to recall, I've seen trauma patients who have suffered an accident caused by a vehicle. The speed standards we set are very important variables in determining survivability and disability. Take this [graph](https://nacto.org/publication/city-limits/the-need/speed-kills/) from the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) (<https://nacto.org/publication/city-limits/the-need/speed-kills/>)